

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

26TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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TIOGA COUNTY LDC GETS GRANT TO HELP AREA BUSINESSES

WASHINGTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that the Tioga County Local Development Corporation has been awarded a grant by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development office to replenish a business revolving loan fund. The Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) of \$82,000 will supplement a previous USDA grant of \$18,326 and a loan of \$300,000.

"This is exactly the kind of federal assistance that's needed in Tioga County," said Hinchey. "The LDC's revolving loan program has been doing great work, but was badly in need of this infusion of cash."

The Tioga County LDC had been approved for a grant of approximately \$100,000 in 2000, but only \$18,326 was available. Today's grant will enable the LDC to fully replenish the loan fund, assisting five area businesses, creating 22 new jobs, and saving five existing jobs. The LDC's grant application was awarded discretionary points because of its inclusion in a Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP) Zone.

"This funding replenishes a loan program that is vital to start-up and expanding small businesses in Tioga County," said LeeAnn Tinney, Tioga County LDC's Business Administrator. "This award represents another benefit attributable to the Tioga County REAP and the advantages the REAP program provides us in securing USDA funding."

The Tioga County REAP Zone was established in 1999 through an agreement between Hinchey, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, and county leaders in an effort to assist in community development. All REAP-approved competitive grant applications to the Rural Development office are awarded preference points.

Rural Business Enterprise Grants are awarded to public bodies, private nonprofit corporations, and federally recognized Indian Tribal groups to finance and facilitate development of small and emerging private business enterprises located in areas outside the boundary of a city or urbanized areas.